



# MDOT Today

NEWS AND INFORMATION FROM THE MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

SUMMER 2002

## Hats Off to Our Summer Retirees!

We asked these early-outers to think back to yesteryear and share some of their most memorable experiences or lessons learned while working at MDOT. Their comments turned up a mixture of MDOT history, horror, humor and heartfelt recollections.

### Margo Schmidt-Derwae

Internal Consultant  
Office of Quality and Reengineering

#### Lesson Learned

"The biggest lesson I have learned while at MDOT is that things always change in government and you can use this as an opportunity to reinvent yourself as I did many times during my career. I started at MDOT in the Welcome Center Program, then was selected as a project manager (first female project manager at MDOT) for a demonstration project for a new type of rest area, then I became the Operation Lifesaver state coordinator. From there I became an internal communications officer and, finally, an internal consultant conducting process improvement and reengineering projects. My advice to those staying is to see change as a positive, an opportunity for growth in your career."

### Jon Keldsen

Administrative Manager  
Highway Operations

#### Memorable Experience

"Back in the early 1980s, much of our field staff was housed in excess property houses or businesses that had been obtained for new road construction projects. Some of these facilities were at best sub-par. As office manager for Construction, it was my responsibility to help the offices address facility problems.

One Monday morning I received a call from the Jackson project office (which we'd been temporarily occupying for about 25 years). In a shaky voice, the clerk reported that the basement had filled up with water over the weekend and something needed to be done right away. I gave her the procedure required to get a plumber, but she still seemed anxious.

I asked if there was something else. "Do you think the plumber will be able to get rid of the big rats that are swimming down there?" she asked. I don't recall if the plumber got the rats or if we sent Jim Culp fishing, but the rats were eliminated.

I'm happy to say that as chairperson of the TSC/Region Office Facility Team, the Jackson office was one of the first "temporary offices" replaced with a new TSC building. In the past five years we have also replaced many other field offices that may not have had rats swimming, but surely had other similar problems. Our team is quite proud of the new TSCs we've built and leased. They give our MDOT staff a pleasant, well-deserved environment to work in...the swimming's not as good though...nor the fishing!"

### Bonnie Good

Office Supervisor  
Aviation Services

#### Lesson Learned

"I learned not to take anything personally. I really grew up here (at MDOT). And I appreciate all it took to get to this point."

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Ted B. Wahby, Vice Chairman  
Betty Jean Awrey  
John W. Garside  
Lowell B. Jackson  
C. Robert Baillod

## Focused on the Future

*“What we call the beginning is  
often the end; And to make an  
end, is to make a beginning. The  
end is where we start from.”*

— T.S. Eliot (1888-1965)



Gregory J. Rosine

This edition of my column is unique, in that it is being read by so many people for whom their work life has changed, is changing or will change.

Some of you reading this column are doing so because your name was on the “Retirees Mailing List” for the first time. I’m sure that must feel strange. Others are reading this as MDOT employees, but many of you may not be reading this with quite the same eye as before.

Much attention has been paid in the past few months to the nearly 500 people who are leaving MDOT through the early-out retirement program. I wanted to take one last opportunity to say not goodbye, but farewell. Someone once referred, jokingly, to MDOT being along the same lines as the Marine Corps. You can leave the Corps, but you’re always a Marine. I believe many people who have been in the MDOT family any number of years will tell you they feel the same commitment to this department. So best of luck in your new endeavors, and don’t be a stranger. We’d love to hear what you’re up to in this next phase of your life and career.

Five hundred is a large number, and there’s no question we’ll have to deal with a lot of fallout from that many people leaving around the same time. Nevertheless, I know that this department – actually the people who make up this department – will not falter. Sure, 500 are going, but that means that 2,800 are staying. And to those of you who are embarking on the journey into a brave new world of a leaner MDOT, let me thank you now. As things get

hectic, try to remember that challenge and opportunity often go hand-in-hand. The other thing to remember is that, although we’ll have fewer people, we have been granted what will probably turn out to be the best replacement rate in all of state government. With a two-for-three rate, we’ll be in good shape.

Certainly, there will be days when we will miss those who are retiring, and there will be times when we will stop and think, “Now what would so-and-so have done in a case like this....” But I urge you to venture out on your own. Learn from those who are leaving, but don’t dwell on their departure. If you continually look over your shoulder to see if you are headed in the right direction, you are almost guaranteed to take a wrong turn. We need to move forward with our eyes focused clearly on the destination that lies before us. Our mission is to provide the highest-quality transportation services for economic benefit and improved quality of life. Our job is to do so in the most effective manner and with the best customer service ever imagined, while having a little fun along the way.

So, let’s roll. 🚗

#### WORTH repeating

*“The best thing about the  
future is that it comes  
only one day at a time”*

— Abraham Lincoln

# Mackinac Bridge View Park Celebrates Grand Opening

What else would you expect to see from the Bridge View Park in St. Ignace? Why, it's a beautiful view!

The "grand-new," eight-acre Bridge View Park opened for business on June 12. It is located west of the toll plaza in an ideal location for viewing one of Michigan's most cherished landmarks – the Mackinac Bridge. Accessible from the Upper Peninsula, the \$1.3 million observation building, along with paved access roads, a walking path, and picnic areas, is bound to become a favorite place for visitors to enjoy the spectacular view.

"The site of the new park has long been a popular place for people to visit and enjoy the bridge," said Hank Lotoszinski, executive secretary of the Mackinac Bridge Authority. "These improvements provide a beautiful setting for the public to experience the spectacular view of the span along with the straits area."

The observation building has five window sections facing the Straits of Mackinac. Construction of the Bridge View Park began in April 2001. It includes paved access roads, a walking

path, picnic areas, trees and landscaped areas containing flowers and shrubs. Admission is free.

Interested in seeing more, but can't drive to the bridge? Just visit the Mackinac Bridge Web site and look under "Bridge Events" to view park photos. 📷



The Mackinac Bridge View Park entrance.

Oak woodwork and special floor tiles creating the Great Lakes add to beauty of the observation building.



When the Mackinac Bridge was constructed in 1957, a bell was placed at the base of each tower to guide approaching vessels during poor visibility. A fog horn was installed in March 1961, and the bells have been silent ever since. In April 2002, the South Tower fog bell was removed from the bridge to be displayed at the Bridge View Park.

COURTESY OF R. FELT





# MDOT Enters e-Government

DIT-DOT Did it!



## BEHIND THE "SCREENS"

Thinking outside – and inside – the box, the core members of the Web Site Migration Team are: (far left:) Web Site Migration Project Manager Chuck Baird; (inside the computer, back row, left to right:) Pat Ora, Leslie Miyasato, Sunesh Veettil, Rick Peterson; (front row:) Deb Davis, Yvonne Morrison, Venkat Jambulingam, and Anne Nolan.

Additional MDOT Migration staff (not pictured) are: Pete Coscarelli, Gus Lluberes, Brian Thelen, Jim Laakko, Chris Chittenden, Mark Grennell, Tom Krashen, Julie Gee, Therese Price, and students Charles Leik and Shaun Roark.

You heard that it was going to happen. Well, it did. DIT did it! Actually, it was DIT and DOT who did it. Thanks to the work of these MDITers and MDOTers – deemed the Web Site Migration Team, on May 31, MDOT officially joined the family of state agency Web sites on Michigan's Web portal, Michigan.gov. MDOT redesigned its Web site and moved it to the state Web portal as part of Governor Engler's initiative to promote the concept of e-Government. All state agencies have completed their migration after redesigning their sites to establish a common look of the state Web portal and to provide more government services online.

By having a common look and style of navigation between agencies, customers and business partners using the portal can move from one agency to another without having to relearn how to get around in each new site.

"Since MDOT launched the first agency Web site in June 1997, Michigan agencies have all gone their own way on the Web. The portal brings us all back together to give state government a single face," said Chuck Baird, MDOT's e-Government Program Manager and project manager for the Web site migration project. "There are times when creativity can get in the way

of usability. This project allowed us to stop and take a fresh look at how the old site had grown and where it needed improvements. We used electronic logs and customer feedback to help reorganize up to 10,000 pieces of content. This was no small task."

But the look of the Web site isn't the biggest change. Soon business area authors and editors will maintain their own Web site content for the first time. By having the ability to create and modify their own services on the Web site, bureaus and divisions will gain a hands-on perspective of the Web and e-Government.

*"People get used to things being organized in a certain way, even if it isn't the best way. Once they're accustomed to the new categories, they should find it easier to use."*

– Chuck Baird, MDOT project manager for MDOT Web site migration

## By keeping the site organized around appropriate categories, rather than bureaus and divisions, it will not have to be redesigned every time MDOT reorganizes.

"We still have a long way to go at MDOT and other agencies in identifying how and where to use e-Government practices to improve services, shorten processes, reduce costs and, in some cases, produce revenue," says Baird. "With the Web Services Team out of the content business, we can focus on design and development of improved services. As MDOT's interface to the Office of e-Michigan and the portal, we will be able to work closely with business areas to help them realize their e-Government potential."

The Web site migration project began in March 2001. It took an MDOT project team of up to 20 people to analyze, design and migrate the old site to its new home. The core team consisted of staff from OIM, Office of Communications, Aeronautics and contracted analysts and developers. Participants in the migration of content included staff from Design, Planning, UPTRAN, and Mackinac Bridge.

A primary improvement to the site was to provide pre-defined categories where content of a specific type is organized and presented so users know they can

go to one place and find what they need. The main categories on the site are listed here (see box). "Web site changes are always difficult for regular customers. People get used to things being organized in a certain way, even if it isn't the best way. They have to relearn where to find everything. We tried to minimize confusion by retaining categories that were popular and adding ones that made sense – from a new user's point of view," Baird said. "The problem is that there is no single customer point of view."

By keeping the site organized around categories, rather than bureaus and divisions, it will not have to be redesigned every time MDOT reorganizes.

MDOT has one of the larger Web sites within state government. It also has over one-quarter of the known state Web-based computer applications. This created a challenge to the migration team. In order to meet the May 31, 2002 deadline, MDOT is migrating its site in phases.

"What we needed to complete by May 31 was the public service portion of the

site," Baird explained. "The next part of our migration will be the creation of a business-oriented site called 'Doing Business with MDOT.' That will serve our suppliers and business partners by creating Service Centers, or 'subportals' that contain links to all the information and services they require, including those from other agencies. The Current Contractors' Service Center is a good example. The Aeronautics site is a sub-portal in its own right." The Bureau of Aeronautics required its own site in order to be able to accommodate the information it maintains for pilots and airports.

This project is not the end of our Web site's redesign and migration. Starting in October, the Web Services team hopes to start a project to design and migrate the Interchange to a state intranet portal. MDOT has one of the largest intranets in the state with more than 45,000 pages. The majority of it is managed by business areas contributing content. "If you think the Web site migration was a challenge, just wait!" Baird said.

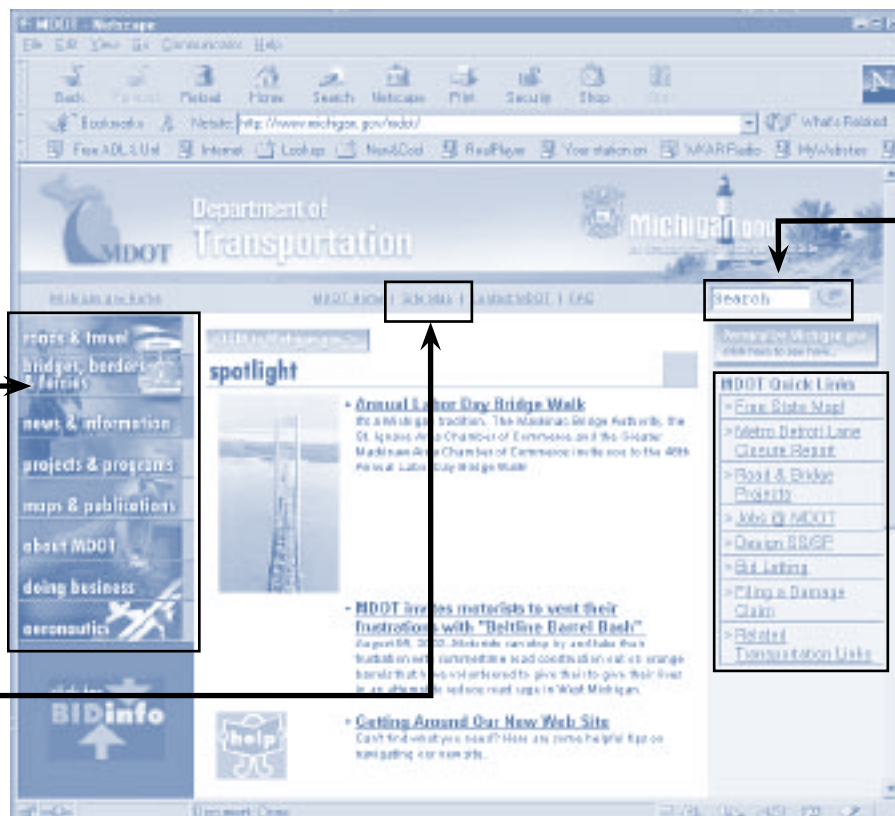
### Navigation Tips

#### Can't find it? Think categories.

For example: manuals, guides, plan sheets and forms are all Publications. Lane closure reports are in Roads and Travel. Carpool Parking Lot maps and Average Daily Traffic maps are in Maps.

#### Use the Site Map.

All of the navigation links are shown on one page. Click on a link and go!



### Use the search engine.

Enter your search criteria. When the results appear, use the Search Options button to refine your search to MDOT only. Select what parts of the MDOT site you wish to search.

### Quick Links.

These links will take you directly to popular pages.

# Give 'em a Brake Cautions: Don't See Red When You See Orange

No one likes the delays caused by road construction. But if motorists are caught speeding through a work zone, they will be sorely surprised this year as new legislation goes into effect that toughens penalties. P.A. 149 is one of several tactics meant to make work zones safer for motorists and their passengers and road workers.

Beginning July 1, drivers ticketed for racing through construction zones face increased points on their driving records. "While the goal of increased points is to deter speeding, we must never forget the people the law is designed to protect," said Secretary of State Candice Miller in media interviews earlier this summer. "The men and women working on our roads could be our mother, father, sister, brother or friend. Slow down and obey the speed limit not just because it is the law but because someone's life and family depend on it."

Jackie Anglemyer and her co-workers, Trace Plummer and Gary Wright, were guests at the state Capitol news conference this year for *Give 'em a Brake*. The trio is lucky to be alive. You'll recall they were working on the side of the US-12 highway last summer when a woman plowed into them.

"When we heard the tires squeal, then we were hit. I mean, that's how quick it happened. It's dangerous. But if drivers just give us a little room, we'll hurry up and get out of the way, and that's what it's all about," said Jackie.

Mark Crouch, a transportation maintenance worker from Grand Ledge, brought his two-year-old

son, Mitchell, to the news conference. "I have seen some close calls in work zones, most due to speed, and was glad it wasn't me," he said. "I just want to get home each night to this little guy."

And so for Jackie, Trace, Gary, Mark, and all the rest of our workers whose jobs are to work on Michigan's city streets and highways, we're working hard to make work zones safer.

Why slow down in work zones? For this little guy and his dad, Mark Crouch, of the Grand Ledge Garage!



It looks like a giant zipper in motion, or maybe a chiropractor's machine, adjusting concrete vertebrae. But MDOT's newest toy is the reason why I-75 traffic isn't as bad during this summer's road construction. The giant machine, rented at a cost of \$400,000 over two years, lifts the wall eight inches off the ground, moves it to accommodate first northbound drivers, then southbound. What used to take two days with many crews working in shifts, now takes hours. In this case, it will take only 90 minutes to move a wall five miles long. The machine moves about five to 10 mph while traffic whizzes by right next to it. Amazing!



Michigan law enforcement officers stand solidly behind MDOT workers and their families at the department's Give 'em a Brake news conference earlier this year.



Here's what the *Give 'em a Brake* coalition is doing to make Michigan's work zones safer:

## Enforcement

- Andy's Law creates penalties for injuring or killing a road worker.
- P.A. 149 increases driver points for speeding in a work zone.
- Traffic fines double in work areas.
- MDOT spends more than \$350,000 in law enforcement patrols and expands effort with county and local law enforcement for the first time this year (Michigan State Police have been included for years).

## Education

- *Give 'em a Brake* spends more than \$200,000 on its public awareness campaign
- Public awareness messages are communicated via billboards, radio and television spots.
- Office of Communications staff tout the safety message continually during interviews.

## Engineering

- Speeds in work zones are reduced by 10 mph increments when necessary.
- Temporary rumble strips on I-94 near New Buffalo warn motorists of approaching work zone.
- Moveable barrier walls on I-75 near Flint can add an extra traffic lane to northbound or southbound freeway depending on peak travel.
- Portable changeable message signs use radar, microwave sensors and wireless communication to display a vehicle's speed, or automatically change the speed limit based on various conditions on I-96 near Lansing.
- A real-time information system and a dynamic lane-merge system help traffic flow in Oakland and Macomb counties.
- Motorists know how many minutes it takes to reach the end of the work zone on I-75 near Telegraph Road, thanks to microwave sensors, wireless communications and portable changeable message signs. 🚧



# Hats Off to Our Summer Retirees!

Continued from page 1

## Terry Outman

Civil Technician Supervisor  
Road Design

### Memorable Experience

"Back in the summer of 1968, I was working in Flint on the I-75/I-69 interchange as a Student Highway Technician. One day my assignment was to go out onto the steel I-beams of the northbound I-75 ramp to the westbound I-69 roadway to check the steel T-studs welded to the top surface of the beam. The deck was approximately 55 feet over the busy I-75 pavement, without any nets. As I inched out over the center spans, I straddled the beam tightly like sitting on a horse. While holding onto the beam with a white-knuckled left hand, I started tapping the T-studs with a hammer in my right hand. Just then, this burly steel worker started laughing his head off at me. He asked why I was hanging on so tight. I told him that I didn't want to fall to the concrete pavement below. He laughed again as he leaped from beam to beam which were about 6 feet apart and said, 'Son, it ain't the 55-foot fall that's going to kill you. It's all those big heavy semi's that are going to squash you to death after you hit the pavement!' At the end of that summer work cycle, I transferred to the Design Division and have been here ever since."

## Steve Vertalka

Transportation Planner  
Planning

### Lesson Learned

"I learned two lessons at MDOT: Don't be afraid to take a risk and don't be afraid to think. Sometimes people get into a routine of just processing things and don't get around to using the gray matter between their ears. When we developed the Michigan Airport System Plan (MASP) a few years ago, we assembled a team that was willing to take risks and use their gray matter. And it paid off. The team won the AASHTO Team Award for the Michigan Airports System Plan Team in December 2000. The MASP identified those airports that best respond to state goals and objectives, provided a framework for airport development funding decisions, and a mechanism to evaluate the effectiveness of programming decisions."

## Sam Graham

Equipment Mechanic  
A&E Garage

### Lesson Learned

"Tomorrow is another day with a new horizon and a new challenge. The past is history; move forward and keep smiling."

## Rod Wyns

TSC Manager  
Muskegon TSC

### Lesson Learned

"I learned to make inquiries in order to find those individuals who are most knowledgeable about the issues being dealt with. It takes the collective talents and skills of co-workers to accomplish our goals. Throughout my career I have been continually impressed with the skills and expertise available within MDOT."

## Juanita Riley

Secretary, Construction  
Taylor TSC

### Memorable experience

"When I first started working with MDOT, I was working in construction in Livonia. I bought a new Camaro and our office was relocated shortly afterward to New Boston. Moving was such a hassle that I remember thinking that if we moved one more time I was going to quit once my car was paid for. However, my co-workers and my job experiences were so impressive that I felt compelled to stay. Since that first time, I moved five more times! But I've always enjoyed my job so it was easy for me to continue my career with MDOT."





## Jim Green

Technical Unit Supervisor  
Real Estate

### *Memorable Experience*

“Receiving the Director’s Award in 2000 was the most memorable thing that happened to me in my career at MDOT. I believe I am the only person to be nominated for a Director’s Award for work in two different divisions. I was also nominated in 1995 in Design. Another great memory was my promotion to Real Estate, where they really appreciate the abilities of their technicians.”

## Marie Lewis

Project Development Manager  
Real Estate

### *Lesson Learned*

“Through working with many people over the years, I have learned that every person has a unique talent and differing abilities, but each should be treated with respect and dignity.”

## Marlyn Stroud

Learning and Performance Specialist  
Learning & Development

### *Memorable Experience*

“I remember the time I’d been up north, delivering a ‘7 Habits’ workshop to MDOTers. They appeared to be a tough audience – slow to speak up, few smiles, and wandering gazes. I thought to myself after the second day, that I wasn’t going to reach most of these folks. Then, on the third day of the workshop, in the morning before the others arrived, one participant came in early just to talk. He talked; I listened. He told me that he’d shared with his wife what he was learning and how that got them to talking. Weeks later I received an e-mail from this participant, saying how much he’d learned and how grateful he was to be a part of the class. There have been many similar stories for me about this workshop and others...what’s memorable is that at MDOT people take time to let me know the impact my job has on them. I always ended up receiving more learning than I gave!”

## Jane Rose

Program Manager  
Economic Development

### *Memorable Experience*

“The two process improvements I participated in were the most memorable. The first process improvement, in 1999, was for the TEDF Financial Tracking Project Implementation and Reconciliation. The second one, in 2001, was for the Transportation Enhancement Program. They were both intense three-day sessions that allowed me to work with some of the best people at MDOT. It was invigorating to spend that time brainstorming with the best and coming up with processes that made our work more efficient, improved our product, and saved thousands of tax dollars.”

## Dan Ellsworth

Information Technology Analyst  
Financial Operations

### *Memorable Experience*

“My personal life and my MDOT life came together in one very positive way at Lansing’s Connxtions Comedy Club on November 15, 1999. I had been taking an evening college class, ‘Stand-Up Comedy and Humor Writing,’ for which the ‘final’ was at the comedy club. MDOT people made up a large part of my very supportive audience at Connxtions, as I expounded on ‘Neckties and Sophistication.’ Thank you;

For a complete list of summer retirees, see page 10.

# Hats Off to the Summer Retirees!

Donald Andrews, Construction & Technology, Dimondale, 32 years  
 Daniel Baker, Utilities & Permits, Cadillac TSC, 28 years  
 Joseph Basil, Traffic & Safety, Port Huron TSC, 34 years  
 Mary Benko, Real Estate Acquisition, Lansing, 15 years  
 Terry Berquist, Project Development, Design, Lansing, 26 years  
 Stanley Blackledge, Traffic & Safety, Lansing, 40 years  
 James Bogner, Construction, Oakland TSC, 28 years  
 Robert G. Bonadurer, Sign Shop, Bay Region, 35 years  
 Robert J. Bonasse, Construction, Mt. Pleasant TSC, 32 years  
 Dennis Brogan, Maintenance, Superior Region, 25 years  
 Mary Brower, Administration, Aeronautics, Lansing, 27 years  
 Ray Browsers, Construction, Howard City TSC, 32 years  
 Paul Brown, Transportation Planning, Lansing, 28 years  
 Linda Brownell, OEO Field Services, Lansing, 32 years  
 Gerald Brzys, Construction, Taylor TSC, 28 years  
 Glenn Bukoski, Construction & Technology, Dimondale, 28 years  
 Nancy Campbell, Design, Lansing, 32 years  
 John Cape, Maintenance Division, Southwest Region, 26 years  
 Sarah Carlton, Real Estate, Bay Region, 32 years  
 Brenda Casteel, Finance Agreements, Lansing, 26 years  
 Charles Chapman, Speciality Crews, University Region, 30 years  
 Curtis Chapman, Construction, Oakland TSC, 30 years  
 Jerry Chartrand, Construction & Technology, Dimondale, 35 years  
 Victor Childers, Traffic & Safety, Lansing, 35 years  
 Charles Cook, Construction, Port Huron TSC, 35 years  
 Herbert Cunningham, Design, Southwest Region, 30 years  
 Gerald Dalling, Design, Lansing, 33 years  
 Bobby Daniel, Administration, Coloma TSC, 26 years  
 Gerald Day, Design Survey, North Region, 36 years  
 Donald Dean, Jones Garage, Kalamazoo TSC, 34 years  
 Terry Dietrich, Construction, Taylor TSC, 28 years  
 Donald Diller, Region Testing, Superior Region, 35 years  
 Jerome Dillon, Construction, Jackson TSC, 31 years  
 Elwin Drake, Construction, Bay City TSC, 23 years  
 Paul Dunn, Specialty Crew, University Region, 34 years  
 William Eckhardt, Construction, Howard City TSC, 14 years  
 Amy Edgar, Passenger Transportation, UPTRAN, Lansing, 16 years  
 Daniel Ellsworth, FODI Support Services, Lansing, 30 years  
 Norfleet Fitch, OIM Technical Support, Lansing, 27 years  
 Arthur Forrester, Jones Garage, Kalamazoo TSC, 33 years  
 David Fowler, Construction, Coloma TSC, 36 years  
 James Foy, Maintenance, Superior Region, 36 years  
 James Galloway, Design, Lansing, 34 years  
 Felix Garcia, East Garage, Bay City TSC, 16 years  
 Michael Glynn, Real Estate Technical, Lansing, 33 years  
 Bonnie Good, Aviation Services, Aeronautics, Lansing, 24 years  
 Samuel Graham, A&E Garage, Lansing, 33 years  
 James Green, Real Estate Technical, Lansing, 34 years  
 Danny Griffith, Tecumseh Field Office, Jackson TSC, 35 years  
 Michael Haapala, Construction, Brighton TSC, 28 years  
 James Hagerman, Real Estate, University Region, 26 years  
 Brenda Hamlin, Real Estate, Metro Region, 32 years  
 Dwight Hankins, Utilities/Permits, Bay City TSC, 35 years  
 James Harris, Construction, Brighton TSC, 33 years  
 Thomas Hawley, Real Estate, Utilities & Permits, Lansing, 37 years  
 Duane Henion, International Bridge Administration, Sault Ste Marie, 14 years  
 George Higgins, Construction, Oakland TSC, 34 years

James Hillock, Maintenance, Blue Water Bridge, 24 years  
 Thomas Hillock, Mackinac Bridge, Maintenance, 10 years  
 Gordon Holben, OIM Technical Support, Lansing, 27 years  
 Barbara Holton, Finance, Payment Section, Lansing, 27 years  
 Carl Horning, Maintenance Bridge Support, Lansing, 35 years  
 Rebecca Hummel, Administrative Services, Lansing, 30 years  
 Bobby Hundley, Construction, Davison TSC, 35 years  
 Rodrick Hursh, Brighton Garage, Brighton TSC, 35 years  
 Nelson Hurt, Construction, Coloma TSC, 30 years  
 Ronnie Jackson, Sawyer Garage, Coloma TSC, 30 years  
 Patricia Jordan, Administration, Metro Region, 27 years  
 Frank Joseph, Coloma Garage, Coloma TSC, 26 years  
 Joseph Joshua, Specialty Crews, Metro Region, 24 years  
 Jon Keldsen, Highway Executive Administrative Services, Lansing, 35 years  
 Charles Ketcham, Maintenance, Superior Region, 31 years  
 Dorene Keyes, Construction, Oakland TSC, 27 years  
 Rita Krick, Maintenance Garage, Alpena TSC, 22 years  
 Marc Labar, Construction, Kalamazoo TSC, 36 years  
 Greg Lafrugh, Charlotte Garage, Lansing TSC, 34 years  
 John Lane, Specialty Crew, University Region, 35 years  
 Robert Lariviere, Traffic & Safety, Metro Region, 34 years  
 Patty Larrinaga, Tech Services, Lansing, 29 years  
 David Latva, Mackinac Bridge Maintenance, 30 years  
 Patrick Lawton, Construction, Detroit TSC, 28 years  
 Ronald Lebbon, Aero, Airport Division, Lansing, 28 years  
 Janet Lee, Administration, Alpena TSC, 33 years  
 Richard Leeman, Design Computer Services, Lansing, 29 years  
 Frank Lemma, Mackinac Bridge, Maintenance, 15 years  
 Marie Lewis, Real Estate Administration, Lansing, 37 years  
 Charles Lilliquist, Mackinac Bridge Operations, 30 years  
 Steven Loosemore, Construction, Ishpeming TSC, 26 years  
 Jack Lyon, Administration, Cadillac TSC, 31 years  
 Christopher MacArthur, Freeway Lighting, Metro Region, 27 years  
 Blanche MacNall, Construction, Alpena TSC, 17 years  
 Robert E. Maki, Executive, Lansing, 30 years  
 Gary Malcolm, Utilities & Permits, Southwest Region, 35 years  
 Carolyn Martin, Mackinac Bridge Operations, 18 years  
 Paul Miller, Design, Lansing, 41 years  
 Linda Mills, FSDI Agreements, Lansing, 30 years  
 Claud Moffit, Specialty Crews, Cadillac, North Region, 34 years  
 Edwin Morton, Marion Garage, Cadillac TSC, 26 years  
 Neil Munson, Marion Garage, Cadillac TSC, 36 years  
 James Natschke, Construction, Oakland TSC, 29 years  
 Richard Nellet, Transportation Planning, Lansing, 31 years  
 Dale Nelson, Newberry TSC, 13 years  
 Richard Nichols, Finance, Lansing, 30 years  
 John Nyquist, Maintenance, Brighton TSC, 37 years  
 Stephen O'Conner, Design, Bridge Engineer, Lansing, 35 years  
 John Oryszczak, Design, Cadillac TSC, 22 years  
 Terry Outman, Design, Lansing, 34 years  
 James Pagels, Paw Paw Garage, Southwest Region, 17 years  
 Robert Papineau, Blue Water Bridge Maintenance, 30 years  
 Andre Paquin, Construction, Jackson TSC, 31 years  
 June Pearson, Administration, Superior Region, 29 years  
 Noah Peters, A&E Garage, University Region, 34 years

Gordon Philp, Niles Garage, Coloma TSC, 25 years  
 Donald Reed, Design, Lansing, 29 years  
 Carlton Reeves, Adrian Garage, Jackson TSC, 30 years  
 Dale Remilong, Mt. Pleasant Garage, Mt. Pleasant TSC, 22 years  
 Courtland Richardson, Construction, Oakland TSC, 34 years  
 William Richway, Specialty Crew, North Region, 34 years  
 Eddie Riley, Construction, Taylor TSC, 30 years  
 Juanita Riley, Construction, Taylor TSC, 28 years  
 William Ripley, Forestry, Bay Region, 28 years  
 David Roach, Construction, Davison TSC, 38 years  
 Jane Rose, Office of Economic Development, Lansing, 30 years  
 Robert Sanborn, Construction, Oakland TSC, 33 years  
 Arvyd Satraitis, Highway Executive Transportation Systems, Detroit, 32 years  
 Dallas Schlaud, Construction, Bay City TSC, 32 years  
 Margarita Schmidt-Derwae, Office of Quality & Reengineering, Lansing, 23 years  
 Ronald Schneeberger, Maintenance, Lansing TSC, 30 years  
 William Setterington, Financial Analysis, Finance, Lansing, 30 years  
 Steven Shastal, Mio Garage, Alpena TSC, 26 years  
 Velve Shaw, Grand Ledge Garage, Lansing TSC, 28 years  
 David Shuck, Construction, Bay City TSC, 32 years  
 Thomas M. Smith, Blue Water Bridge Administration, 31 years  
 Timothy J. Smith, Hastings Garage, Marshall TSC, 23 years  
 Marion Spight, Coloma Garage, Coloma TSC, 11 years  
 James Steck, Construction, Oakland TSC, 34 years  
 Robert Stevens, Maintenance Division, Superior Region, 30 years  
 Marilyn Stroud, Training and Development, Lansing, 21 years  
 Ruth Su, OIM System Support, Lansing, 29 years  
 Linda Sullivan, International Bridge, 22 years  
 Gregory Swanson, Utilities and Permits, North Region, 29 years  
 Gerald Sweeney, Construction & Technology, Dimondale, 34 years  
 Michel Tarazi, Design, Emergency Structure, Lansing, 32 years  
 Shirley Teachout, Administration, Traffic & Safety, Lansing, 30 years  
 June Testani, Design, University Region, 13 years  
 Kenneth Therrian, Mackinac Bridge Maintenance, 25 years  
 Robert Tiura, Construction, Taylor TSC, 34 years  
 Philip Tonkin, C&T Construction, Administration, Dimondale, 41 years  
 Larry Tornga, Construction, Grayling TSC, 36 years  
 Max Tower, Design Survey, North Region, 39 years  
 Steven Vertalka, Planning Services, Transportation Planning, Lansing, 28 years  
 Ronny Wagner, Construction, Davison TSC, 32 years  
 James Ward, UPTRAN, Lansing, 33 years  
 John Warner, Construction, Davison TSC, 35 years  
 Larry Washburn, Construction, Metro Region, 32 years  
 Robert Webster, Construction, Oakland TSC, 30 years  
 Wayne Wentworth, Traffic & Safety, Signals Design, Lansing, 32 years  
 Nadeen White, Construction & Technology, Dimondale, 22 years  
 David Wilson, Construction, Metro Region, 27 years  
 Francis Wirick, Blue Water Bridge Administration, 31 years  
 William Wood, Design, Escanaba TSC, 32 years  
 Thomas Work, C&T Construction, Administration, Dimondale, 31 years  
 Rodney Wyns, Muskegon TSC, Grand Region, 30 years  
 Daniel Young, Construction, Mt. Pleasant TSC, 35 years  
 Michael Zavadil, Design, Lansing, 28 years  
 Walter Zischke, Transportation Planning, Lansing, 32 years



**Roberta Tisdale**

## Preparing for Change

Life is full of challenges, and MDOT employees stand poised to meet the next challenge – the exodus of 485 employees in the state’s early-out retirement program.

All of us who are not retiring must feel confident in our ability to continue to serve the citizens of the state. Because we are MDOT, we recognize – as did our predecessors – that the future of our organization involves continual change, and, because of this, we stand ready for the next step.

### How will the structure of the department change during this transition period?

We have established two new bureaus within Operations: Development and Delivery. Development includes design and real estate functions and Delivery includes traffic, maintenance and construction functions. All of our bureaus will be headed by senior bureau executives. (Bureau heads will no longer be referred to as deputy directors; the new title is consistent with the state’s classification structure.) In addition, within the Finance & Administration Bureau, the Learning & Development Division and the Office of Quality Re-engineering have merged to become the Division of Performance Excellence. Also, we plan for the Office of Equal Opportunity to be part of the Finance & Administration Bureau. If you are interested in viewing the new organizational chart, go to the MDOT Web site at [www.michigan.gov/mdot](http://www.michigan.gov/mdot), then “About MDOT” to access it.

### Will the department be able to fill openings quickly as employees retire?

Our department has been granted a two-for-three replacement rate for those taking advantage of the early-out retirement program. MDOT can replace 333 positions. This is probably one of the best replacement rates of any state department and represents the credibility MDOT has with state government policy makers. By OHR, administrators and personnel liaisons working together, our goal is to fill positions (on average) in less than 40 days.

### How will we retain the knowledge of employees who are retiring?

The newly formed Division of Performance Excellence has developed a transition tool kit which provides tools for both retirees and their managers/supervisors to use to facilitate the transfer of knowledge from our retirees to the “next generation” of MDOTers. For a copy of the document, go to The Interchange, choose “Performance Excellence” under Quick Picks and select: “Transition and Change at MDOT” under the Contents listing.

### How many people will retire during the early-out retirement program?

In June, MDOT employed about 3,200 people. Sixteen percent of the staff will take advantage of the early-out. About 70 percent of the people slated to retire will do so between August and November, and of those, 55 percent will retire on Nov. 1.

### Which offices or regions at MDOT will have a higher-than-average early-out participation?

The following regions/bureaus are experiencing early-out participation that is above the MDOT average of 16 percent: Aeronautics (21 percent), Office of Equal Opportunity (23 percent), Real Estate (20 percent), Traffic and Safety (37 percent), UPTRAN (19 percent), Bay Region (23 percent), Metro Region (22 percent) and University Region (18 percent).

### This tremendous change is a lot to handle. Can we do it?

Change is hard for people. But MDOT is filled with survivors. Our successes as members of society, as parents, and as workers are testimony of our ability to adapt and change. MDOT has gone through many changes. We’ve survived a fire, the 1997 early-out, the acceleration of the MDOT program, the implementation of new performance management standards, and countless other hurdles. I have great confidence in the abilities of MDOT people and that, as an organization, we handle change as opportunity.

### Do you have any advice for those who remain?

Learn all you can from those who are retiring. Understand and work in harmony with your leaders and team members to influence the change and transition in your work area. Continue to be knowledgeable, curious and learn about MDOT. Take responsibility for your career and take advantage of additional training or new assignments. And take care of your physical and emotional health. We need each one of you, every day. 🙌

**Roberta Tisdale is the  
Office of Human  
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**Visit the OHR site on the Interchange:  
[www.mdot.state.mi.us/ohr/index.cfm](http://www.mdot.state.mi.us/ohr/index.cfm)**

**WORTH repeating**

*The person who says it cannot be done  
should not interrupt the person doing it.*

**-Chinese proverb**





Doug Novak

## Show Me the Money!

*“Doing an injury puts you below your enemy; revenging one makes you even with him; forgiving it sets you above him.”*

-Nylic Review

In most years, the state Legislature typically adjourns for summer recess in early June. In this pivotal election year, legislative members seeking re-election or election to another office are anxious to hit the campaign trail. Instead, the Legislature is heatedly trying to hammer out numerous appropriation bills – as well as strategies for new sources of revenue – in order to balance a weakened state budget.

### Do we have a budget bill yet?

By the time you receive this edition of MDOT Today, we can only hope that our appropriations budget has been passed and signed into law. However, at the time of this writing, our budget bill is undergoing intense scrutiny in Conference Committee. Tied to the overall state bud negotiations are the Airport Security and Protection Plan (ASAP) and diesel fuel simplification.

Both proposals are poised for final approval by the state Legislature. ASAP will utilize \$6 million from the airport parking tax to secure a \$60 million, five-year bond package that will leverage federal and local funds for a total of \$1 billion in airport improvements across the state. The diesel simplification package will replace the state's convoluted diesel tax collection process with a “pay at the pump” process similar to gasoline, thereby providing additional revenue for transportation.

### Are there other legislative issues which impact MDOT?

Two other bills of significance to MDOT – Definition of Maintenance and Asset Management – passed in a June late-night session and have been expected to be signed by the governor. Detailed information about these issues was reported in the winter edition of MDOT Today. In addition, the Legislature is close to revamping public transportation in southeast Michigan through a package of bills that would create a new Detroit Area Regional Transportation Authority.

Specific information on legislation contained in this article, or any other bills of interest, can be accessed through the Office of Governmental Affairs Web site, [Michigan.gov](http://Michigan.gov), or [MichiganLegislature.org](http://MichiganLegislature.org).

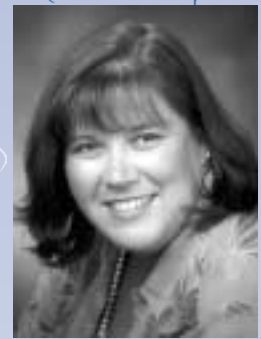
Doug Novak is MDOT's legislative administrator for the Office of Governmental Affairs.

To reach him, call 517-373-3946 or e-mail: [novakd@michigan.gov](mailto:novakd@michigan.gov)

## Change Becomes the Status Quo

*“The human tendency prefers familiar horrors to unknown delights.”*

-Fred Woodworth



Debbie Marshall

Change, good or bad, is always a little scary. Even from Washington, I can sense that these are uncomfortable times at MDOT. But I want to remind you that this is not the first time in recent years that MDOT has been asked to change the status quo. When I took this job, no one believed that we could accomplish more in federal legislation and funding if we approached it differently. But working as a team to embrace a new way of working, we got stunning results.

### Why do you bring this up now?

MDOT is not the only place on earth where huge changes are taking place. (Although I am sure that it feels like it sometimes!) The U.S. DOT and other federal agencies also are facing significant restructuring in the face of the proposal for a Department of Homeland Security. I believe the president's proposal is just the start of those changes. We need to be vigilant about changes that have an impact on Michigan and be sure we are communicating with each other to ensure that we approach new developments as part of a team.

### Aren't the Coast Guard and the Transportation Security Agency the only parts that will move?

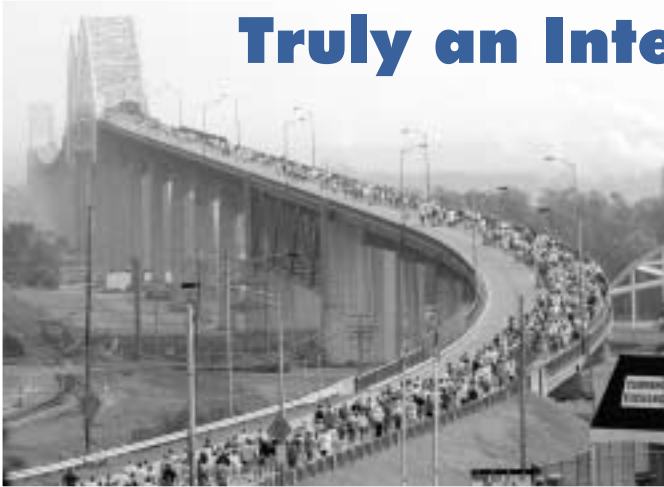
That is the current proposal. However, with the major reauthorizations for highway, transit and aviation coming up next year, I would not be surprised to see other proposals for big changes for the U.S. Department of Transportation. It is also important to note that these two entities make up half of the federal transportation budget – that is a significant cut to the responsibilities of the department. Many people have wanted to restructure it for a long time – I think it is ripe for change, particularly change that empowers states a bit more.

### Are you saying we want that?

I am saying that we should look at change as an opportunity. We need to recognize that sometimes change works to our advantage and do our best to ensure that it does!

Debbie Marshall is our federal legislative liaison in Washington, D.C. To reach her, call 202-624-5840 or e-mail: [marshallde@michigan.gov](mailto:marshallde@michigan.gov)

# Truly an International Bridge



Toll supervisor Donald John MacPherson comes to work at the Sault Ste. Marie International Bridge each day with his heritage in mind and his highland regalia (Scottish kilt, jacket, sword, etc.) close by.

Because a lot of people mispronounce his name, he reminds people regularly, "There is nae (Scottish for "no") fear in MacPherson." It's pronounced Mack-fur-son.

You see, Don is proud of his past as he looks to the future. "How do you know where you're going if you don't know where you came from?" he asks. Since his father passed away in 1994, Don started to look a little deeper into his roots. Scotland is a big part of his family's heritage and his dad always told the family that they'd get to go back to where it all began. Don's going back again this year because of a \$1,000 donation that he made in his father's name in 1999 to Clan MacPherson, a one-of-a-kind museum in Scotland. His father's name will appear on a special plaque when it's unveiled. His father, Samuel Rigby MacPherson, will be known as one of the Guardians of the Clan MacPherson.

Any chance he gets, Don wears his kilt and the rest of the highland regalia. "I'm just proud to be a Scot," he said. "At first I was a little apprehensive about it," said MacPherson. However, now he proudly wears it as he educates the public, attends functions and looks for other places to simply make a difference. Many people think that because he wears the kilt that he must also know how to play the bagpipes. Unfortunately, Don does not know how. "I might start, though, because I would love to know how to play them," he said.

Donald John, as he's called sometimes, has been working at the International Bridge for the past 13 years. He and his wife, Michele, live in Sault Ste. Marie with their 15-year-old daughter, Theresa, and two dogs.

When asked about the most enjoyable thing about his job at the International Bridge he said, "It's interacting with the people." He even has a collection of hundreds of photos of ...well, dogs that have crossed the bridge. Well, actually dogs in their owner's vehicles. Don also has taken photos of vintage cars that have come through the toll booth as he briefly visits with the customers.

"I really love the conversation with the people that cross the International Bridge," MacPherson said. 🐾



COURTESY OF R. FELT

Don MacPherson and International Bridge Administrator Phil Becker proudly display the special tribute Don received from the province of Ontario for hosting the International Tartan Day Celebration on April 6 at Lake Superior State University. Don also received a special tribute from the state of Michigan in 1999 for the Tartan Day Celebration.

## Take a Hike on the International Bridge

June 29, 2002...They came by the hundreds, braving blisters and baking temperatures to walk the 2.8 miles of the International Bridge on the one day of the year when the structure is open to pedestrian traffic.

The International Bridge, which connects the sister cities of Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., with Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, is 40 years old this year. It is a unique landmark that connects the two countries.

The slogan for the walk and fortieth birthday celebration was, "Bridging Our Past, Connecting Our Future."

It was selected from among 100 entries submitted earlier to the 16th Annual Bridge Walk slogan contest. MDOT's own Phil Broessel, Lansing Central Maintenance, came up with the slogan. Although Phil

was not able to attend the walk – and donated his free bridge coupons to the runner-up – he was quite surprised and pleased to have his slogan selected.



Phil Broessel

COURTESY OF R. FELT



## MDOT family tree

We're pleased to bring you this *MDOT Today* column which includes news about changes in the MDOT family tree: new hires, appointments, promotions, retirements, and, sadly, deaths. This information is supplied by the Office of Human Resources for April 1 to May 31, 2002. If you wish to include news about births or adoptions in your family, please contact the *MDOT Today* staff or send any information via GroupWise to MDOTToday@michigan.gov.

### New Hires

**Paul Arends**, transportation engineer 9, Delivery, Grand Region

**Shaun Bates**, transportation engineer 9, Operations, Traffic and Safety

**Jarrett Burgess**, transportation engineer 9, Coloma TSC, Southwest Region

**Dennis Collins**, construction tech 8, construction, Superior Region

**Erick Cromartie**, transportation maintenance worker 6, Maintenance, Metro Region

**Timothy Croze**, transportation engineer 9, Maintenance

**Brad Davidson**, environmental quality specialist 13, Airports, Aeronautics

**Mike Duell**, licensed engineer specialist 13, Specifications and Estimates, Design

**David Eggert**, transportation planner 11, Statewide Transportation Planning, Planning

**Linda Feldpausch**, word processing assistant, Administration, Office of Human Resources

**Jason Fossitt**, transportation engineer 9, Road, Design

**Dan Garcia**, transportation engineer 11, Taylor TSC, Metro Region

**Ruth Haaser**, transportation engineer 9, Muskegon TSC, Grand Region

**Mohammad Hammad**, transportation engineer 11, Traffic and Safety

**Kristin Hissong**, department manager 15, Freight Safety and Services, UPTRAN

**Evan Huizenga**, transportation engineer 9, Davison TSC, Bay Region

**Brian Hurtekant**, accountant 9, Financial Operations, Finance and Administration

**Rebecca Jones**, accountant 9, Financial Operations, Finance and Administration

**Justin Junttila**, transportation engineer 9, Traffic and Safety, University Region

**Dennis Juntunen**, bridge operator 7, Maintenance, Superior Region

**Derrick Kirkwood**, transportation maintenance worker 6, Maintenance, Metro Region

**Dallas Knapp, Jr.**, transportation maintenance worker 8, Delivery, Grand Region

**Kristine Kurtze**, senior executive management assistant 11, Commission Audits

**Robert Locke**, transportation maintenance worker 6, Jones Garage, Southwest Region

**Frank Lombardo**, transportation engineer 9, Specifications and Estimates, Design

**Greg Losch**, transportation engineer 9, Traffic and Safety, University Region

**Jeffrey Mack**, construction tech 8, Taylor TSC, Metro Region

**Aaron Mattson**, transportation engineer 9, Bridge, Design

**Nancy Martin**, bridge operator 6, Specialty Crew, Southwest Region

**David Poisson**, bridge operator 7, Maintenance, Superior Region

**Shannon Roehl**, bridge safety officer 6, Blue Water Bridge, Metro Region

**Corey Rogers**, transportation engineer 9, Maintenance

**James Rybick**, construction tech 11, Delivery, Grand Region

**Maria Silver**, licensed transportation engineer 12, MITS Center

**Dale Spencley**, transportation engineer 9, Maintenance

**Lemaro Stevens**, transportation maintenance worker 8, Delivery, Grand Region

**Robert Steward**, engineering tech 8, Project Development, Metro Region

**Kimberly Teenier**, transportation engineer 9, Road, Design

**Judith Toombs**, bridge safety officer 6, Blue Water Bridge, Metro Region

**Richard Wanamaker**, transportation maintenance worker 6, Specialty Crews, Southwest Region

**Greg Winfield**, transportation engineer 9, Specifications and Estimates, Design

**Stephen Zaglaniczny**, transportation engineer 12, Grayling TSC, North Region

### Promotions

**William Amacher**, transportation maintenance worker 9, Maintenance, Superior Region

**Terry Anderson**, senior management executive 19, Development, Executive

**John Arnott**, steeplejack 9, Mackinac Bridge, St. Ignace

**Anthony Baciak**, licensed engineer specialist 13, Local Agency Programs, Design

**Kevin Beauchamp**, engineering tech 11, C&T, Superior Region

**Linda Burchell**, licensed engineer specialist, Development, University Region

**Steven Campbell**, steeplejack 9, Mackinac Bridge, St. Ignace

**Thomas Captain**, steeplejack 9, Mackinac Bridge, St. Ignace

**John Cima**, transportation engineer 12, Development, Superior Region

**Margaret Claussen**, traffic tech 8, Brighton TSC, University Region

**Landan Clement**, steeplejack 9, Mackinac Bridge, St. Ignace

**Kevin Dell**, steeplejack 9, International Bridge, Sault Ste. Marie

**James Ecker**, steeplejack 9, Mackinac Bridge, St. Ignace

**Sue Espinoza**, department analyst 11, Office of Equal Opportunity

**John Friend**, senior management executive 19, Delivery, Executive

**Jason Gailitis**, licensed engineer manager 14, Development, North Region

**Gary Gallup**, transportation maintenance worker 9, L'Anse Garage, Superior Region

**Kristen Gimney**, secretary 9, Lansing TSC, University Region

**Reatha Gould**, department analyst 9, Statewide Planning, Planning

**Timothy Graham**, transportation maintenance supervisor 12, Lansing TSC, University Region

**William Gravelle**, steeplejack 9, Mackinac Bridge, St. Ignace

**Peter Hanson**, construction tech 12, Muskegon TSC, Grand Region

**Dean Harr**, auditor manager 14, Commission Audits

**Thomas Hillock**, steeplejack 9, Mackinac Bridge, St. Ignace

**Ronald Jackson**, transportation maintenance worker 9, Maintenance, Metro Region

**Connie Johns**, department analyst 9, Passenger Transportation, UPTRAN

**Connie Kern**, department analyst 9, Contract Services

**Robert Kinsella**, steeplejack 10, International Bridge, Sault Ste. Marie

**Eugene Lachappell**, transportation maintenance worker 9, L'Anse, Superior Region

**Edward Lester**, steeplejack 9, Mackinac Bridge, St. Ignace

**Thomas Moran**, steeplejack 10, Mackinac Bridge, St. Ignace

**Roger Munson**, steeplejack 10, Mackinac Bridge, St. Ignace

**Douglas Nobel**, transportation maintenance worker 9, Maintenance, Superior Region

**Hilary Owen**, transportation engineer 12, Grayling TSC, North Region

**Peter Paramski**, licensed engineer manager 14, Newberry TSC, Superior Region

**Peter Pfeiffer**, state department division administrator 15, Delivery, Southwest Region

**Robert Rios**, traffic technician 12, Traffic and Safety

**Robert Randolph**, transportation maintenance worker 9, Maintenance, University Region

**James Rogers**, steeplejack 9, Mackinac Bridge, St. Ignace

**Dale Sauvola**, transportation maintenance worker 9, L'Anse Garage, Superior Region

**Allan Schneck**, transportation engineer 12, Oakland TSC, Metro Region

**Bryan Schnetzler**, transportation maintenance supervisor 11, Atlanta Garage, North Region

**James Simon**, property manager 13, Jackson TSC, University Region

**Norman Simons**, transportation maintenance worker 9, Maintenance, Superior Region

**Scott Singer**, transportation engineer 12, Project Development, Design

**Roberta Smith**, department analyst 9, Passenger Transportation, UPTRAN

**Jeremy Sprague**, steeplejack 9, International Bridge, Sault Ste. Marie

**Allen Stempki**, steeplejack 10, Mackinac Bridge, St. Ignace

**Charles Streeter**, steeplejack 9, International Bridge, Sault Ste. Marie

**James Sutton**, steeplejack 9, International Bridge, Sault Ste. Marie

**Paul Tallman**, steeplejack 9, Mackinac Bridge, St. Ignace

**Elden Terro**, construction tech 11, Construction, Superior Region

**Robert Tervo**, transportation engineer 12, Development, Superior Region

**Kenneth Therrian**, steeplejack 9, Mackinac Bridge, St. Ignace

**John Tracy**, steeplejack 9, Mackinac Bridge, St. Ignace

Continued on page 15



# Surviving Construction:

## Owosso and Williamston Take an Active Role



In Williamston, special signs were created to direct visitors to parking during summer construction.

Imagine that you are a business owner or resident in a small town and you've just learned that a major road reconstruction project is coming to town. Surely it will bring disruption. What to do?

Several communities in the University Region devised a solution that involved early planning, strong communication and a community effort to lessen the impact of construction.

Two summertime downtown reconstruction projects in the small towns of Williamston and Owosso, located

near Lansing, involve major road and bridge work. To help minimize the impact on residents and business owners, staff at the Lansing TSC started working during the fall of 2001 with several downtown groups. As a result, the focus shifted away from the standard theme of how to avoid construction and, instead, shifted toward a more positive how to bring customers downtown during construction.

"Our challenge to ourselves is to continually energize the community and everyone's knowledge about construction and the ample alternatives to downtown business access," said Owosso Community Development Director Phil Hathaway. "It's important to take the mystery out of road construction and give the public detailed descriptions of the work."

In Owosso, downtown merchants developed a theme: "Make the Right Turn to Downtown Owosso." The theme was tailor-made, since left-hand turns are prohibited at key times during construction. One thousand pins

communicating the clever theme were distributed to downtown employees. The theme was also used during special sales campaigns and downtown events.

In Williamston, special signs were developed directing visitors to various downtown parking lots, demonstrating the accessibility of the town. The character on each sign was developed by a local artist and selected by Williamston community members. In addition, thousands of construction brochures detailing the location of parking areas near the construction zone were distributed downtown.

Finally, work was suspended during the local summer festivals – the Curwood Festival in Owosso and the Red Cedar Festival in Williamston – and as many lanes were temporarily reopened. Special provisions were written into each contract to minimize the disruption during the festivals.

Through careful planning and a cooperative effort, MDOT and the local communities have proven they can survive construction together. 🦄

## MDOT Family Tree

Continued from page 14

**Kelly Villarreal**, executive secretary 11, Financial Operations, Finance and Administration

**Frances Visnaw**, steeplejack 9, Mackinac Bridge, St. Ignace

**David Weber**, transportation professional 9, C&T

**Thomas Zurburg**, transportation maintenance worker 9, Lansing TSC, University Region

## Appointments

**C. Robert Baillod**, Ph.D, of Dollar Bay, has been appointed to the State Transportation Commission. Baillod is a professor and chair of civil and environmental engineering at Michigan Technological University in Houghton. He replaces Brian Larche, of Escanaba, who resigned. Baillod is appointed to represent the general public for a term expiring Dec. 21, 2003.

**William Gnodtke** and **Murray Wikol** were appointed to the Mackinac Bridge Authority, which oversees the operation of the Mackinac Bridge. Gnodtke, of Charlevoix, is the former president of Gnodtke and Associates, a governmental consulting and fund-raising corporation. He is re-appointed for a term expiring June 30, 2008. Wikol, of Bloomfield Hills, is program director of Ariba, Inc., a company that provides enterprise spend management. Wikol is re-appointed for a term expiring June 30, 2008.

## Deaths

**Douglas Stirrett**, 56, died May 5, 2002 in Bad Axe. He retired from the Cass City TSC as a construction tech in 1997 after 28 years as an inspector. Doug is survived by his wife, Joyce; his son, Tom; three brothers, and his mother. Doug loved to give out peanuts and popcorn to friends and co-workers and was famous for his fudge. He entertained local school children with his Mr. Peanut costume in what had become a great tradition.

**Patricia Jordon**, 54, died of cancer on May 8, 2002. Pat was a 27-year state employee and the office manager at Metro Region. She started her career as a child protective services investigator, later moving into personnel with FIA. In Nov. 1989, she started at MDOT where she handled personnel and union issues. On the wall

in her office hung a framed motto: "I survived damn near everything." She is survived by her husband, Daniel, her parents and two brothers and two sisters.

COURTESY OF METRO REGION



**James Thill**, 56, died May 17, 2002 in Fayette at his home after a lengthy battle with cancer. He had been retired for five years from MDOT, most recently working out of the Engadine Maintenance Garage, with most of his previous time in the Escanaba Sign Shop. He is survived by two sons, James Jr., and Joseph; and former wife, Cindy. An avid outdoorsman, Jim enjoyed hunting, trapping, being a bear guide and gardening.

**Wendell Blikken**, 84, died on May 26, 2002 in Ypsilanti. Employed by MDOT for 20 years, he was an electrical engineer developing traffic flow monitoring equipment. He had retired in 1992, but came back to the MITS because he loved the work. He then retired a final time in 1995. He held several patents, but was best known for his development of a technique to improve traffic detection by using buried loops. The loops are an integral part of the MITS which brings data back from the freeway. These loops now are used throughout the nation. Wendell is survived by four sons.



COURTESY OF M. PENDELTON

Continued on page 16

## MDOT Family Tree

Continued from page 15



### Births/Adoptions

**Mark Sandel**, Central Maintenance, and his wife, Anita, are the proud new parents of Charles Dean, born April 20.

**Michael Heiss**, Howard City TSC, and his wife, Michelle, are happy to announce the birth of their daughter Kaitlynn Pearl, born April 18. She joins Michael, 5, and Tyler, 2. Her proud grandparents are **Julie Heiss**, Grand Region, and **Mike Heiss**, Central Maintenance Division.

**Jeannie Poole**, Traffic and Safety, is the proud adoptive parent of twin eight-year-old girls, Annette and Lannette. Jeannie was the foster parent of the girls, whom she adopted on April 22.

**Aaron Hunt**, Lansing Design, and his wife, Nicole, are the proud parents of Travis, born May 23. Travis has a big sister, Allyson. Grandpa Louis Hunt is retired from North Region Maintenance.

**Ed Tatem**, Detroit TSC manager, and his wife, Maria, announce the birth of their first child, Isabella Flores, on May 28. Ed, a native New Yorker, broke with tradition a bit when he gave out Yankee hats rather than cigars to celebrate the birth of his daughter.

**Aaron Hengesbach**, Statewide Bridge Reachall crew, and his wife, Niki, are the proud parents of Alex Robert, born June 26.

# Woodward Wins National Designation as Scenic Road

Woodward Avenue's 28 miles of history, culture, chicken shacks and wig shops now can take its place alongside the nation's most cherished treasures.

U.S. Secretary of Transportation Norman Mineta confirmed what most Michiganians have known for years, declaring the multilane mishmash of motels, manicured boulevards, Coney Islands and cultural institutions a national scenic byway.

An outgrowth of the old Saginaw Trail used by American Indians, Woodward was the nation's first concrete highway and first to use a three-colored traffic signal. It starts at the Detroit River near US Wig of Michigan and wraps up at Modern Compost Inc. in Pontiac. Along the way are the Detroit Institute of Arts, Fox Theater, Detroit Zoo, buildings designed by famed architect Albert Kahn, and lesser-known sites such as Vanish Hair Removal in Ferndale.

"It's a good road all right, but if you're looking to see the sights, I might go elsewhere," said Shelby Paul, who for 31 years has had a front-row to Woodward as a bartender at Ducky's Bar in Pontiac.

Reprinted in part from *The Detroit News*.



One of Woodward Avenue's famous sites. Woodward, located in Metro Region, was selected for national designation as a scenic byway.

MDOT Today

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Joan H. Justema

**Graphic Design:** Brian Whitfield  
Graphics Unit

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